



# Focus on Rayonier mill

Department of Ecology's Solid Waste Program

## Public comments invited on work plan to direct cleanup and investigation of Rayonier mill uplands

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) invites the public to comment on a work plan that has been prepared by Rayonier, Inc. to direct an investigation and identify cleanup alternatives for the upland portion of the Rayonier Port Angeles mill site and surrounding areas.

The comment period will be open until May 7 on the agreed order and management plans for a remedial investigation/feasibility study of the uplands environment.

The Rayonier Port Angeles mill site is located at 700 North Ennis St., Port Angeles, Clallam County.

### Site background

Ecology and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe are working cooperatively to provide oversight of a cleanup of the Rayonier mill site, which is being conducted by Rayonier under the authority of Washington's Model Toxics Control Act. Ecology, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and Rayonier have developed the work plans after consultation with several federal, state and local agencies that have regulatory interests at the site. Those agencies have been provided with the opportunity to perform a preliminary review of the work plans.

The site is located along the waterfront at the east end of Port Angeles Harbor, below the coastal bluffs on a combination of native soils, beach deposits and imported fill. Ennis Creek flows from the Olympic Mountains through the site and empties into the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The delta of Ennis Creek and the adjacent shoreline is a cultural site of great importance to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe. Historically, this was the location of Y'innis, a fortified settlement that was one of the principal centers of Klallam culture for many generations.

The site was occupied in 1887 by the Puget Sound Cooperative Colony, which operated a sawmill there until 1893. The U.S. Government built a new sawmill on the site in 1917 to supply materials for the manufacture of aircraft. In 1930, Rayonier's predecessor began production of dissolving-grade pulps using an acid sulfite process. Rayonier permanently ceased production at the mill in 1997, and the mill buildings and equipment have since been dismantled.

Over the operational life of the mill, liquid and semi-solid wastes were discharged to Port Angeles Harbor and to the Strait of Juan de Fuca through a series of outfall pipes. Fly ash and flue gases were emitted from boilers that burned combinations of fuel oil and wood waste to produce steam used in the pulping process. The amounts, composition and discharge locations of these wastes varied. Over time, control requirements became more stringent. However, in addition to releases allowed under the mill's environmental permits, there were episodic spills to the ground and pollution released to both water and air that exceeded accepted levels.

In 1997, in response to a petition from a coalition of concerned citizens' groups, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiated an investigation to determine if the site should be proposed for listing on the National Priorities List, a federal list of contaminated

sites in the U.S. In February 2000, through an agreement between EPA, Ecology and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, EPA deferred the cleanup of the site to Washington state.

## **Remedial investigation/feasibility study**

The objectives of the remedial investigation/feasibility study are to determine the nature and extent of contamination associated with the former Rayonier Port Angeles mill in soil, surface water, groundwater and freshwater sediments; to evaluate current and future risks to the environment and to human health in areas believed to be affected by the mill operations; and to develop and evaluate a range of cleanup alternatives to address contamination that requires cleanup.

## **Public comment period is April 7 through May 7, 2003**

The agreed order and management plans are now available for your review. After reading the documents, if you have comments, please submit them in writing to Bill Harris, Washington Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47775, Olympia, WA 98504-7775. You can submit them by e-mail to [whar461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:whar461@ecy.wa.gov) or by fax to 360-407-6305. Bill Harris' phone number is 360-407-6253.

Comments are due by May 7, 2003. Ecology will review all comments received and the documents will be revised as necessary. Ecology will provide a summary of the comments received and how they have been addressed in the final documents.

The agreed order and management plans are available for review at the following locations:

North Olympic Library  
System, Reference Desk  
2210 South Peabody  
Street  
Port Angeles WA 98362  
360-417-8500

Peninsula College  
Library  
Reference Desk  
1502 East Lauridsen  
Port Angeles WA 98362  
360-452-9277

Washington Department  
of Ecology  
Southwest Regional  
Office Records Center  
300 Desmond Drive SE  
Lacey WA 98503  
360-407-6365  
[swal461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:swal461@ecy.wa.gov)

During the public comment period, copies of these documents may be requested at no charge from the Department of Ecology through the contact provided above. The documents can be provided either on paper or on CD-ROM. Please contact the Department of Ecology for details.

## **Interim action report**

A separate report describing three interim actions conducted on the site during the summer of 2002 is also available to the public at these same locations. The report documents the pre-construction sampling, construction activities and post-construction confirmation sampling associated with the interim actions.

*If you require this publication in an alternate format, please contact 360-407-6129 (Voice) or (TTY) at 711 or 1-800-833-6388.*